



HUGH E. WEATHERS
COMMISSIONER

South Carolina Agriculture and Forestry Industries Have \$41.7 Billion Economic Impact
Governor Haley/Commissioner Weathers cite 23% growth since 2006; Industries account for more than 212,000 jobs

Columbia, S.C. (February 10, 2015) – South Carolina agriculture and forestry have grown 23 percent since 2006 to have an annual economic impact of \$41.7 billion and support 212,000 jobs.

These figures were shared when Governor Nikki Haley and Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers unveiled a study conducted by Dr. James London, London & Associates, of Clemson, South Carolina. The study was commissioned by the Palmetto AgriBusiness Council, South Carolina Department of Agriculture, South Carolina Farm Bureau and Clemson University Public Service Activities.

“The news that agriculture and forestry mean tens of billions of dollars for our economy and 212,000 jobs for our people is a real reason to celebrate,” said Governor Haley. “We have invested in agribusiness and in our rural areas, our farmers know we continue to have their back, and working with Commissioner Weathers, we’re going to keep South Carolina on the move.”

South Carolina’s diverse Agribusiness Cluster consists of 60 sectors in the agriculture component and 29 sectors in the forestry component – generating \$41.7 billion total and \$26.8 billion in direct output. In aggregate, these sectors account for 9.1 percent of economic activity, 10.5 percent of the state’s workforce and \$8.8 billion in labor income in South Carolina.

“It’s exciting to see this growth in jobs and our agribusiness economy,” said Hugh Weathers, S.C. Commissioner of Agriculture. “The numbers also help portray the magnitude and powerful influence of this great industry in our state. We must continue to actively support our farmers and producers in South Carolina to generate an even greater impact on the rural economy as well as job growth.”

“Agriculture and forestry share a rich heritage in South Carolina,” said David Winkles, President of the S.C. Farm Bureau. “Those sectors, including food, fiber and forest products and support services continue to be major economic drivers for our state.”

Much of the growth can be attributed to the “50 x 20” plan pushed by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture along with the Palmetto Agribusiness Council and the South Carolina Farm Bureau and the 20/15 Project led by the South Carolina Forestry Commission and the SC Forestry Association. The 50 x 20 plan calls for increasing the economic impact of the



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Agribusiness Cluster to \$50 billion by the year 2020. The 20/15 Project calls for the forest industry to have a \$20 billion impact by year 2015. Reaching these targets would increase Agribusiness's impact by \$16 billion over the impact assessment for the year 2006.

"The purpose of this effort is to let South Carolinians know that the agribusiness industry is focused on the future, not the past," said Gene Kodama, S.C. State Forester. "The outlook for this sector has improved significantly and will continue to make great strides, creating more jobs and driving economic growth for years to come."

To download the full study, visit <http://scagribusiness.org/agstudy>.

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